Che Man-Killer of the South Park

wheel and her troubles ran the gamut of the possibilities in the locomotive disaster line, from the simple derailment of her pony truck at the yard limit switch when the passenger was due, to the oft-repeated yet never successful experiment of two trains running full speed it onposite directions trying to pass each other on the same pair of rails. The inhumerable failures of this experiment did not deter the "50," and whenever a head-end collision occurred on the South Park the usual interrogation was, "Who was on the '50' and how badly was she damaged?" For though it always takes two engines to make a head-end collision, the record of the "50" was such that, without inquiries as to whether or not, she was conceded beforehand as one of the two. Throughout the mountain roads of Colorado she was known as the "South Park Hoodoo" and the sobriquet was well-earned. If an engine struck a landsilde it was the "50"; anything standing on the track and chashed into by the passenger was sure to be the "50," unless, as occasionally happened, the "50" was pulling the passenger and herself did the crashing. She had a great reputation as a discoverer of broken rails, and invariably followed the discovery with a plunge into a bed of the mountain ravine along which the road ran. But out of all these scrapes she would emerge from the back shop with all traces of her recent disaster removed, but still holding her reputation, while her luckless crew would yet be in the hospital or had been consigned to the scrap heap for all time.

Was a "Sewing Machine."

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Was a "Sewing Machine."

She was one of the many Mason engines purchased by the South Park and was of the type designated in the vernacular of the road as sewing machines from having their eccentric gear outside the main and side rods. An odd looking locomotive to eyes not accustomed to them, but certainly popular, as a class, among enginemen, because of the easy riding qualities. This popularity extended to the "50" until such time as she acquired unto herself the reputation of a man killer.

It is to be regretted that a complete record of her sins has not been kept, but such as are at hand will demonstrate that it was no idle superstition that caused a qualm of treplity to the men when called to make a trip on her, and as the engines were run in the

"DAYLIGHT REVEALED A SIGHT MAGNIFICENT)

"and a state a qualm of trepidity to the men when called to make a trip on her, and as the engines were run in the chain-gang system every crew on the road had a turn with the "50." They knew that, whatever the cause, she had been wrecked more times than all the other engines on the road, and her proverbial ill-luck was such as to bring to the most intrepid runners a feeling as if they were going to their own funeral when "called" for her.

Her Lürst Misadventure.

"DAYLIGHT REVEALED A SIGHT MAGNIFICENT!

"Caught in the gangway and his remaining leg was sacrificed. Strange, too, but Sam recovered from this, had sticks fitted to both his stumps and ran location to but Sam recovered from this, had sold the Rio Grande Western, until, like many another, he went out in the great strike of 1894. Sam is now proprietor of a drug store in Salt Lake

City.

Seven More Victims

In the interval.

from the first day she ever turned a Story of the Bloody Record of a Hoo-doo Locomotive---The Awful Wreck at Idaho Falls.



to the most intrepid runners a feeling as if they were going to their own funeral when 'called' for her.

Her Hirst Misadventure.

On her first trip she left the rail, through some pretext or other, with a heavy train of ore and on a down gradand after some days the wreckers found her in the bottom of the canyon, the underdog; in a pile of debris that had once constituted a train of cars with its laating. They also found Sam Willard, the engineer, with his left leg cooked to the knee, where it had been pressed against the boiler head by the coal pile. Sam was alive, and recovered, but Bill Redding, his fireman, had been killed right away, as one of the wreckers expressed it. Sam had his leg amputated and about a year later again appeared for work. It is a strange coincidence that Sam lost his left leg on the "50" maiden trip, and lost his right gon the same engine on the last trip she ever made on the South Park. Sam's last mishap was in a collision where he was about to jump before they struck, but he was

However, Wiggins and all the rest of the South Park engineers and firemen had nothing more to fear from the hoodoo, for about this time it sulted the Union Pacific's financial policy to wreck the South Park, and having transferred the traffic to the Denver & the surface of th

This was in the winter of 1885-86, and in the early morning of the 13th of May of the latter year the "50's" headever recorded. As stated, the road was narrow gauge, but the management had decided to make it standard, and pre-pratory to this work was transporting to the north end the new, sixty-pound steel rails for the standard gauge track. Early in May a brakemen's strike—one of those chronic eruptions that Ed Dickenson used to say could originate nowhere but on the seventh and eighth districts of the Wyoming division of the Union Pacific—spread to the Idaho division, of which Robert Blickensderfer was superintendent. Blick, as he well as he had thought, and departing was called, fired the strikers and in a few days was operating the road with a house for a month, calculating that the before they struck, but he was "59" had had ample time to get into

been disturbed and was still set for the mainline. While the men were working elsowhere, the cars, being on a slight grade, and with no brakes, began to move down hill, and one of the brakesmen, noticing it, jumped on the first car to set a brake. As stated, all the brakestaffs had been removed to accommodate the rails, but the brakeman was not aware of that fact, and hoping to avoid a derailment in the yard he jumped off and ran ahead to the open switch, which he threw for the mainline. Then he remounted the cars to set the brakes which were not there, and crazed with the sudden realization of his blunder and its possible consequences, he jumped from the runaway cars and ran wildly into the sagebrush, where a sheriff's posse found him four days later.

A Frightful Crash.

a large caliber cannon, her demolition could not have been more complete. There was just nothing left of her but her squitty drivers and to these, even, the taint of jonahism attached so strongly that they were condemned, and the type could not have been more complete. There was just nothing left of her but her squitty drivers and to these, even, the taint of jonahism attached so strongly that they were condemned, and the '90," with two more victims added to her already long list, was for ever marked vacant on the equipment list. Other rails were shot like arrows for 200 feet from the point where the collision occurred, and after winging their half-ton of weight through the air, drove themselves a third of their length into the earth. Not a single car in either train was fit for rebuilding, and the body of the caboose was sheared off just above the s.lls. None of the train crew were injured, however, as one brakeman was in the cupola, above the damage, and the other and the conductor were sleeping on the lockers. So passed the jonah of the South Park, and with her going went many a sigh of relief from erginemen who knew her history.

A Frightful Crash.

A Frightful Crash.

A Frightful Crash.

In the first mile the heavily-laden cars had attained the velocity of an express train on the heavy down grade, but they had yet four miles to run before they met the up-coming third section, piloted by the hoodoo "50." A comparison of time made subsequent to the disaster showed that not more than four minutes had elapsed between the time the cars were run out on the mainline and their meeting the up-coming train. The combined weight of the eleven cars and their lading was 450,000 pounds, and at the given rate of speed let some mathematician calculate the force of the impact, allowing a rate of six miles per hour for the up-coming train. The latter could see only so far as the headlight of the "50" penetrated the darkness, and the three engine crews were all unconscious and equally unwarned of approaching danger. George Flood was engineer of the "50" and Jimmy Clark, a mere boy, was his fireman. George Oram and Billy Purdie were on the "17" and Bert Chapman and Azel Keach on the "24." Jimmy Clark was down putting in a fire when the crash came, and according to the verdict of the coroner's jury, was "killed in four different places." Every flue in the "50's' boiler was driven back through the boiler-head, through the coal pile and actually through the

Such were the conditions when, on the night of May 12, 1886, the "50" carried green signals for a triple header as third section of train 52", the preceding section, like this one, consisting of eleven narrow gauge cars loaded with steel rails and a caboose. These cars were but twenty-eight feet in length, and norder to load the thirty-four foot rails it was necessary to remove the brake staffs. At that period, too, the use of the automatic air was confined to passenger trains, the freights being handled by straight air.

The "50," piloting the "17" and "24," pulled out of the division terminal—at that time called Eagle Rock, under which name it acquired a notoriety that the town thought to rid itself of by adopting the present more romantic name of Idaho Falls: At a snail-like pace the three engines dragged their load up the 3 per cent grade toward the divide, which marks the boundary of Idaho and Montana, and about 3:30 a.m. of the 13th were within five miles of Dry Creek, the next telegraph station, with a steep pull before them.

Green Brakeman's Blunder.

The second section had reached Dry Creek and there received orders to do some switching, which the conductor, with his two green brakemen, both of whom were making their first trip over the road, proceeded to do. It was necessary to place the eleven cars of steel on a siding, the switch of which at the lower end of the yard had not

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